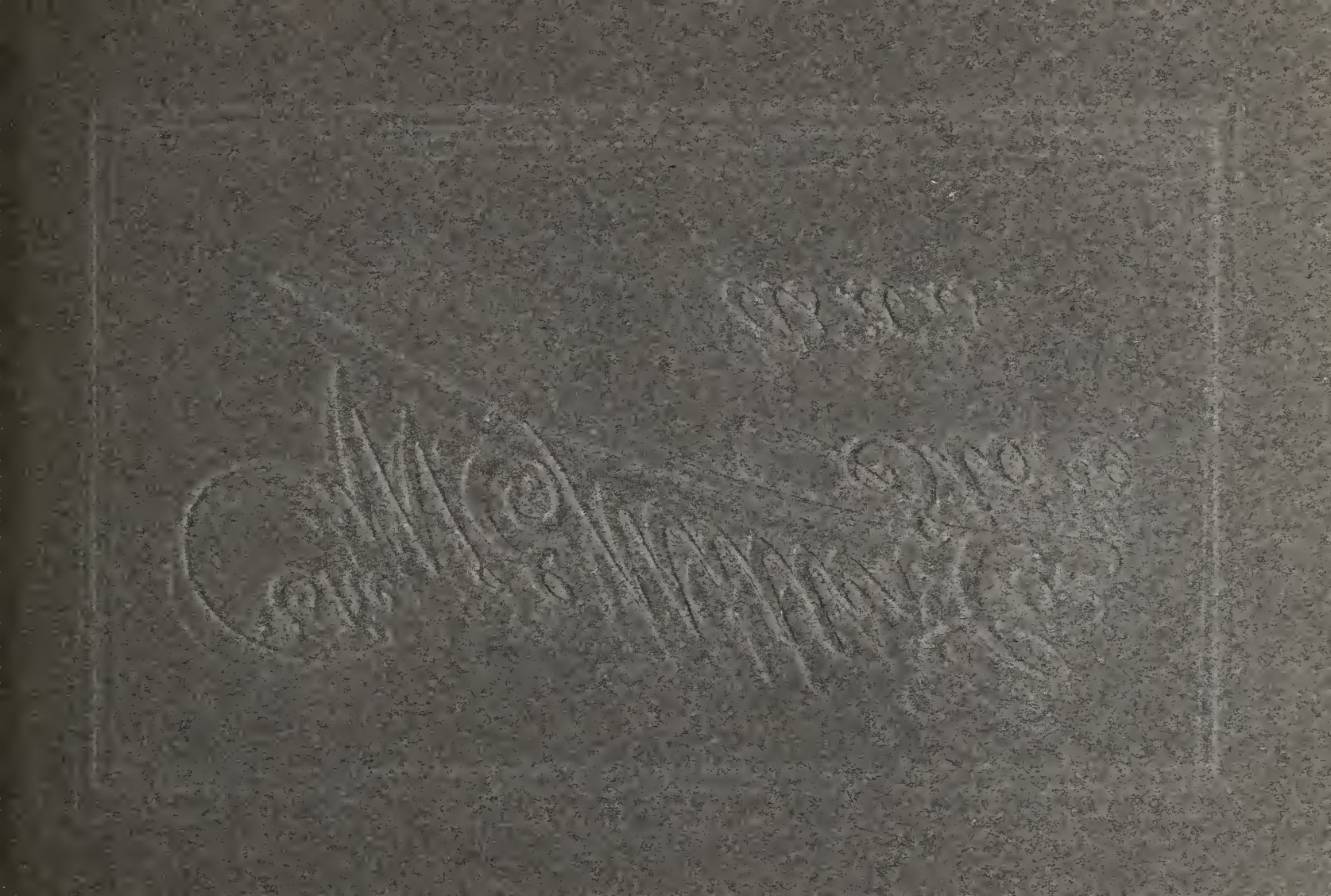
The W. E. Miller Co. Store

as it is.



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The W. E. Miller Co's Store

"As It Is."

A Photographic Panorama of its Departments and People.

Winchester,

Indiana.

Designed, Engraved & Printed by
Dickinson Bros., Grand Rapids, Mich.

"The next thing to the real is the semblance of it."

...Preface..

It is not our aim in publishing this work to make it a production of Art and Literature but to place before you the store and its people, true to life, as viewed through the camera, appending to each illustration a plain, unvarnished description as brief and accurate as we can make it, thus enabling you to see and understand the store "As It Is," which we sincerely trust will effectually assist in promoting a more friendly feeling and closer acquaintance in the future.

The W. E. MILLER CO.,
Winchester, Indiana. 1902.

W E MILLER
COMPANY
WM CAMPBELL

"A thing's a thing without a history to it."

"A Bit of History."

THIRTY-ONE YEARS form the character of a man, woman and store. On September 10th, 1871, this store was born. Birthplace, Ridgeville, Indiana.

W. E. Miller, sole proprietor, head clerk, bookkeeper, cashier, floor walker and janitor, christened it "THE BEE HIVE."

The building in which it first saw light is still standing and is one of the old landmarks of our neighboring town. It has a total frontage of eighteen feet and a depth of fifty feet. The "Bee Hive" occupied one floor, thus having an area of 900 square feet of floor space. Here, with a total cash capital of $162.00, without song or ceremony, blow or bluster, in a very unassuming manner was planted the acorn from which has grown this sturdy oak. Although a small store and a small business, there was a certain indescribable air about it, a magnetic something, which met you at the very threshold, and from the first hour of its existence invariably created a feeling of hearty welcome and confidence. The principles upon which it was founded were not mythical, but genuine, and were so straightforward, broad, honorable, and obviously different from the ordinary business in that day, that it was quickly recognized by the good people of Ridgeville and vicinity, as not only a pleasant but safe place to buy, and was accorded such a generous and substantial patronage, that in

„The acorn, from which has grown the sturdy oak."

"A Bit of History."

one year it became necessary to increase the stock and remove to a more commodious room. Here it was continued seven years under the style of Miller and Kitselman, and increased steadily until July 8th, 1880, when Mr. Miller retired from the business, which was continued by Kitselman, Seaney & Co.

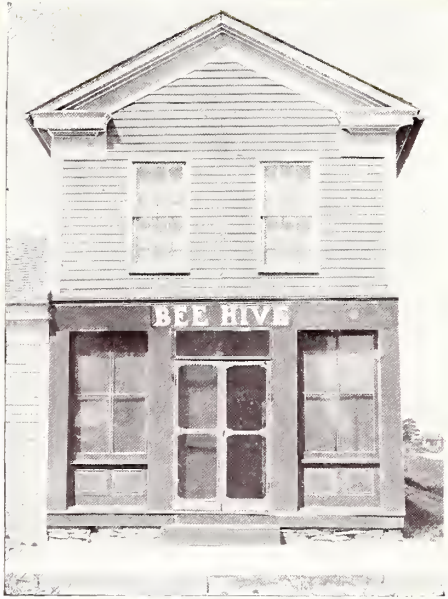
On November 5th, 1880, Mr. Miller located in Winchester, and opened a new business a few doors east of our present location (*see page 10, cut 2*). This was a mere pocket handkerchief of a store compared with the present—a leather shoestring compared to a necklace of pearls—but the same cheery welcome awaited its visitors, and the same fair methods evolved that had made the Ridgeville store famous, and from the first day the doors were opened to the public it enjoyed a lucrative business, steadily increasing until the present. 1901 was vastly the largest year the store had in all its thirty-one. The increase alone was equal to a good sized business in Winchester, or any other city of its size. But 1901 was a year of growth in almost all stores in all cities. To give ourselves a testimonial framed with selfishness and colored by pride is farthest from our intention. All such worn and soiled self recommendations reduce to a small figure the real value of the people who attempt them.

"A Bit of History."

This "Bit of History" tells you of our beginning. From the following pages you can form a good idea of "The Store As It Is" today. As to our success we leave you to judge. For thirty-one years we have kept just as good a store as we knew how; we have aimed to treat everybody alike and right in every respect; we have tried to do our *best* all the time. If, on any occasion we have fallen short of our intentions, it was, we assure you, simply a mistake and wholly unintentional. If, in the future, errors should again occur, we stand at all times ready to correct them, and consider it our duty to do so. Every new method we've introduced, every turn from the ruts of the past have come simply because they were needed to make the store nearer perfect; and because of these betterments the store is different from other stores.

"All that is human must retrograde if it does not advance."—We intend to do better; to improve the store in the future; and it is not prophesy, but logic, which affirms that the system which has attested itself for an age, in good times and bad times, only stands upon the *threshold* of its career, and that it is destined to prove its usefulness to a still larger portion of mankind in the century just begun.

THE W. E. MILLER CO.



THEY
TELL THE STORY MANY
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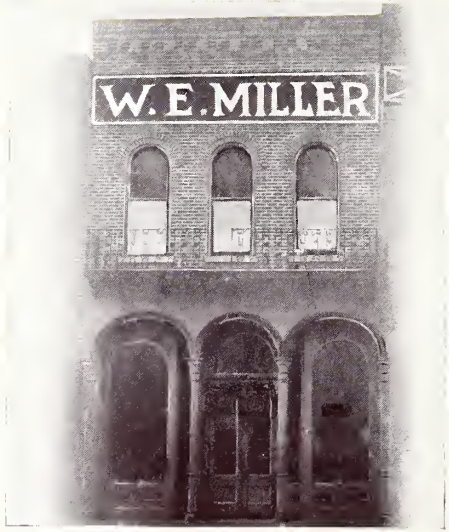


Length of building, 165 feet; width, 62½ feet. Basement under the entire building.
Total amount of floor space occupied, 33,139 square feet, or nearly three-fourths of an acre.

A SELECTION OF DRESS GOODS

IT isn't what you spend for a dress that makes it beautiful; it is the material and taste shown in the design and making—the harmony of reciprocating effects of goods and trimmings.

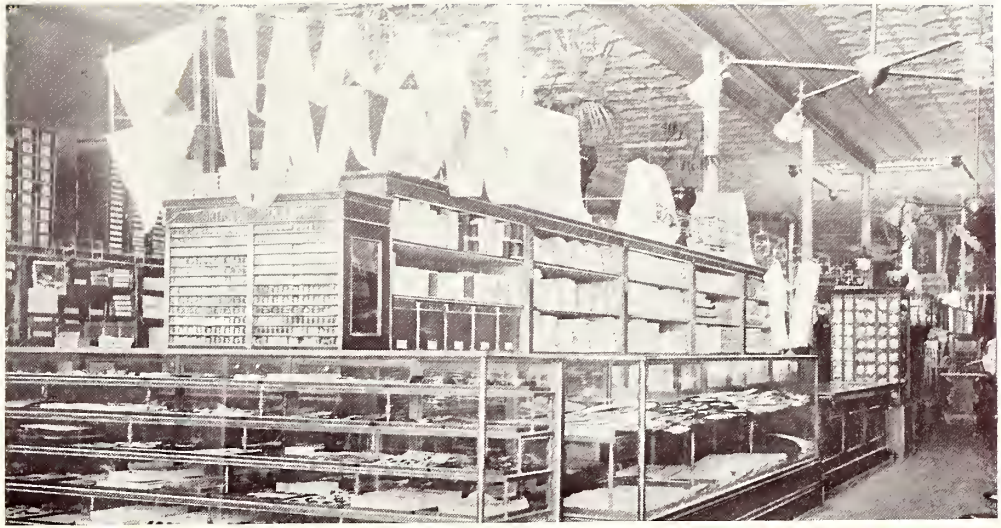
If you are undecided as to the exact style you wish, or the kind of trimmings to buy, we have expert designers who will take pleasure in assisting you. They make this part of the business a study, and are constantly in touch with the newest and most popular styles in materials and trimmings.

THERE'S poetry in new wash goods; buds and blossoms peep through lattice-work of satiny sheen as though a noon-day's sun had shone on some great greenhouse and all the blooms had come to us.

Some of them are dreamy, some pert, some with flowers on their surface that the printers traveled a thousand miles to study or came across by chance in their rambles. Cotton, it seems, is each season woven ino daintier textures and brightened with more charming color work.

We believe that our business connections help us to gather more choice and uniformly dainty wash goods than you'll find in any other one store in this part of the state. Come and enjoy them in whatever way you please. This store is an object lesson in beauty and style—not merely a place to buy and sell.

THIS cut quite vividly portrays a section of the domestic stock, one of the principle features of the store. Most all stores sell staple sheetings, shirtings, tickings, etc., at popular prices, but all stores don't give you the best goods for the least money. The simple price alone is meaningless—it's the quality that tells. All so-called five cent muslins and fifty cent linens are not five and fifty cent values Domestics are too often bought for the simple purpose of selling at a price, regardless of any intrinsic value in the article itself. Here, however, it's different ; real worth or value is the first consideration. Our big outlet enables us to purchase original packages direct from the mills in such quantities as to secure the lowest price always, and our goods are bought by experts who know their business, and are thorough udges of qualities.



VERY few stores of this size can boast of a special department for this class of goods that equals this one, and yet there is not a line in the entire store that is more popular. Beautiful white goods and embroideries and billowy laces are always greatly admired by all ladies, and are a very necessary article in every wardrobe There is so much trash of this kind, however, and the opportunities for deceptions so great, that purchasing is usually considered hazardous. We obviate all risks of this kind here, by the utter exclusion of all unworthy goods, so that you can always feel assured of getting your money's worth Our buyers are just as particular in selecting a five cent lace or a ten cent embroidery as a dollar silk ; the pattern must be right, the material reliable, and the quality just as good as can be had for the money.

CLOAK AND SUIT ROOM

MISS LIDA BROOKS

A GARMENT to meet the approval of the woman of to-day must be out of the ordinary ; no set or general style will satisfy. She rightfully demands a standard of perfection which is only attained through the agency of expert designers and master workmen, whose ideals are on a par with the highest of custom tailors. Each season our line of cloaks, suits and skirts are made to our own order—for us exclusively—and many of the styles are entirely original, thus making them practically individual creations.

FITTING ROOM

ABOVE cut shows where we "make them fit." Anything you buy here in the way of men's women's and children's ready-to-wear garments must fit properly before you are permitted to take it. If a skirt does not hang properly, or a cloak does not fit just as it should, Miss Cline, who has charge of this department and is an expert in this particular line, will make the necessary changes in a short time, and it will cost you nothing whatever. We consider a satisfied customer our best advertisement, and fully realize the fact that entire satisfaction does not consist simply in the service of an article but in fit and appearance as well.

A CONCERN that fails to make quality its watchword, will just as surely go down as a ship that strikes a rock in mid ocean.

"Keep the Quality Up" has been the slogan of this store since the first days its doors were thrown open to the public, and no one department more clearly demonstrates this principle than the Hosiery and Underwear.

This cut gives you an excellent idea of the stock "as it is," and you can judge as to quality and assortment almost as easily as if you were in the store. Both lines are—as nearly as practicable—bought direct from the manufacturers, thus affording us an advantage in price that is easily observed by comparison.

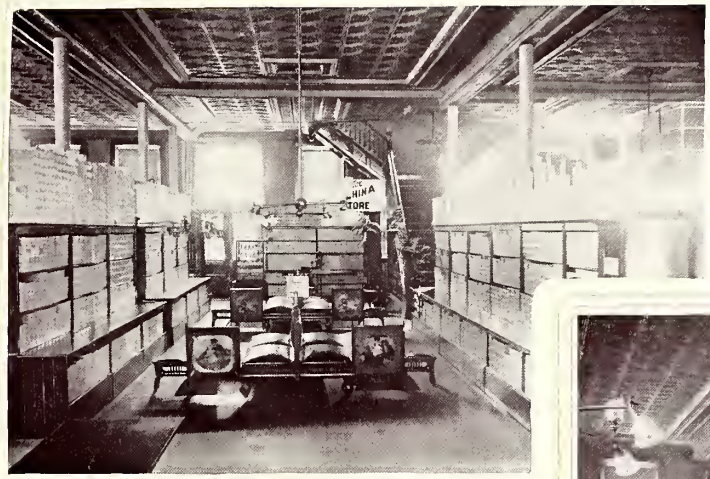
THE appearance and the making are the first points that women notice about ready-to-wear garments.

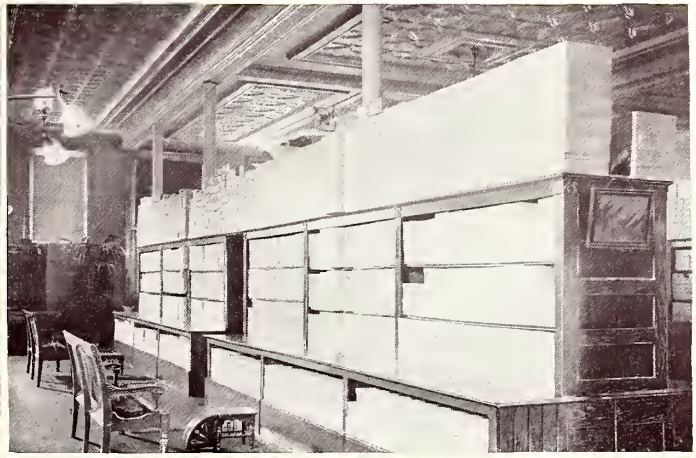
Is the garment pretty and stylish? For there's style in underwear as well as outerwear.

Then a closer examination; the material; the way the trimming is put on; the sewing; the fullness. These points are all looked after by Miss Rigsby and her assistants, and every garment must be right, or we've no use for it. Don't hesitate to be particular when you come here. It suits us exactly; we're that way ourselves.

CORSETS and gloves should be properly fitted in order to give the wearer satisfactory service. In this respect the two articles are very much alike. All women cannot, with comfort, wear a 22 corset because 22 is her size, but should select a style adapted to her figure, taking special care to have a length in which length of waist corresponds to her own length of waist. We carry at all times a complete line in four distinct lengths—short, medium, long, and extra long. Also styles with short hips, low bust, and medium waist. Miss McDonald gives this particular part of the business her special attention, and is pleased at all times to assist in selecting the style and shape best suited to the form.

All kid gloves are fitted and guaranteed.





THIS shoe store started three years ago, with two well defined purposes. First—To deserve your confidence, and to rapidly grow to be biggest and best. Second—To be helpful ; to give you the best shoes we we could have made and charge you common sense prices. Our general business organization makes economies in all lines, but in none are they more easily noticeable than in shoes We handle factory made-to-order goods only, and guarantee every pair we sell to give reasonable service.

NO general store in this or any other city is more thoroughly a man's store. A man entering the average big store feels like a fish out of water—he doesn't buy, or if he does buy he gets what he doesn't want. He's scared. We've changed that here. Men buy, men sell to you, men greet you—its all men in the east room.

It requires nearly 3,000 square feet of floor space to accommodate this clothing store, and the stock is at all seasons as nearly complete as it is possible to make it. We make a specialty of reliable made clothing. The workmanship of every garment, before it is put in stock must undergo a thorough inspection, it must be made of honest, reliable wearing material. If there is any cotton in it, we know it, and will tell you so. The style must be correct and the tailoring strictly first class.

A CORNER IN THE CLOTHING STORE

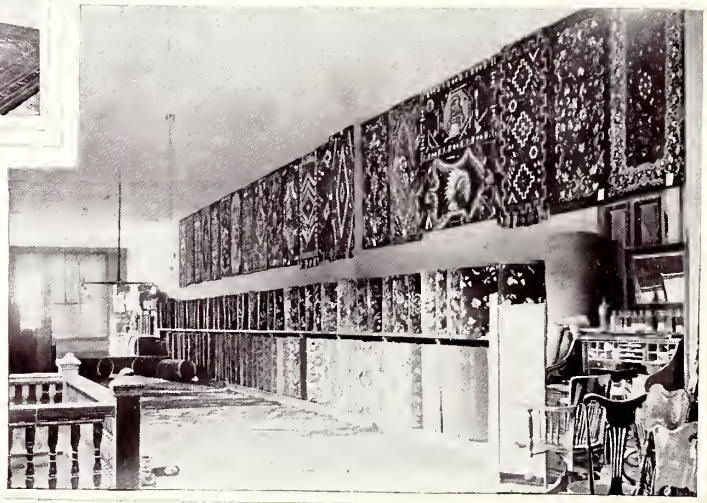
IF quality, style and price make a store the right place to buy clothing, those reasons make it also the right place to buy your collars, shirts, ties—everything you wear. It pays us to do our best in haberdashery the same as it pays us to do our very best for you in clothing, shoes or carpets—and we do. We go to the makers of our furnishing goods with certain requirements and conditions that result in our getting even better than they are accustomed to turn out. We select the finest silk for our ties, the best material for our shirts, the most substantial webing for our suspenders—and so on, and on, and on. We always have what the young fellow who leads the fashion may want, but we don't forget the solid citizen, whose ideas run in a more conservative groove, Best of all, our business conditions justify lower than ordinary prices.

CARPET MACHINES.

J. EN A. BARNES MGR.

THE above cut shows our Brussels and ingrain carpet machines in operation. The new machine that is being operated by Mr. Barnes is run by electricity derived from our private electric plant in the basement; It is designed for sewing ingrain carpets especially, and makes a whip seam which permits use on either side, the surface being perfectly smooth. It is very rapid, and an ordinary carpet can be made in a very few moments We make all carpets entirely free of charge, and carry as good selection of Unions, all-wool ingrains and medium priced Brussels as you will find in any store in the state—without exception.

We handle reliable goods only, and will invariably save you money on all purchases.



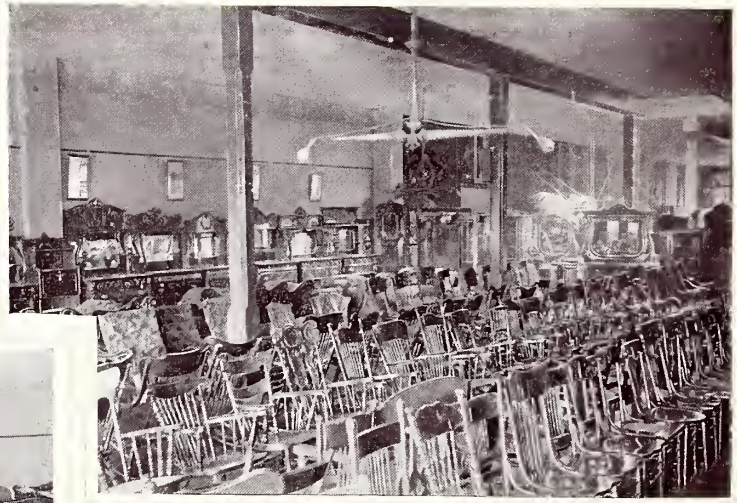
VIEW IN THE CARPET ROOM.

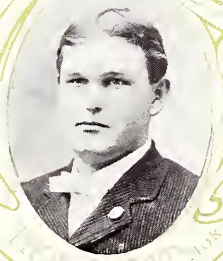
CURTAIN DEPARTMENT

ABOVE is a good picture of our curtain room—the coziest corner about our entire store. It is nicely carpeted, furnished with plenty of easy chairs, and is a very pleasant, homelike place. It is simply one of the store conveniences, arranged for your comfort, and we want you to come and enjoy it any time,—look at the curtains, portieres, and rugs if you wish ; we are always pleased to show you, and if you are not ready to buy, you'll not be urged to do so.

THERE is shoddy furniture just as there is shoddy clothing. Glue and varnish are cloaks for hiding many a poor piece of cabinet work; it looks well on the floor, but when the test comes it is found wanting. The only good purpose it serves is to warn the purchaser against the store that sells such stuff. Such furniture isn't cheap in the sense of being economical, because no one can afford to throw it aside and buy better sorts, when he finds out he has been fooled.

A medium price here is no bar to artistic design. Shapes and styles, like the quality, must be right always.





THIS department, although our latest addition, is by no means the least. The cut shows but a partial view of the room and gives you a very inadequate idea of its beauty and magnitude. The total amount of floor space occupied is 6,600 square feet. The stock consists of a well assorted line of French and German china, American and English Queensware and glassware, art-ware and bric-a-brac. There isn't another department like it in this part of the state, and we could not afford to carry such a stock were it not in connection with other lines. As it is, however, you are enabled to select from an assortment equal to any found in cities of ten times our population, and at much less than big city prices.

THE TRUTH
IN ITS ENTIRETY-BRIEFLY STATED

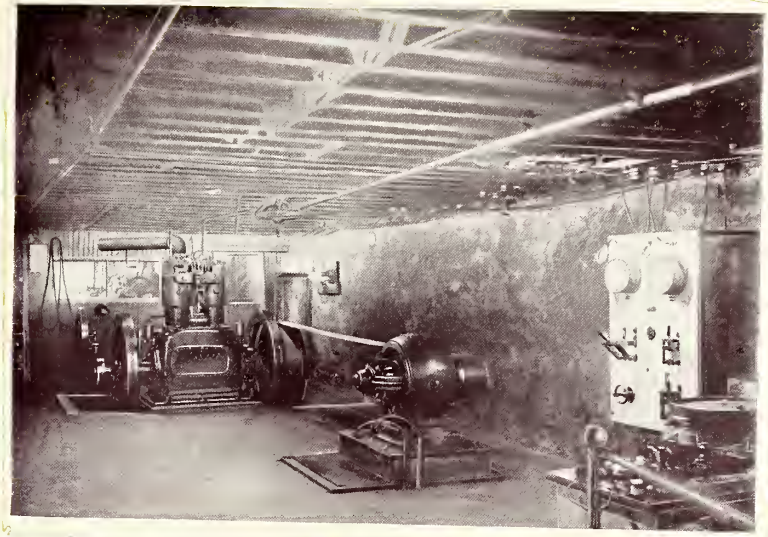
WE occupy nearly three-quarters of an acre of floor space, 4,000 square feet of which is occupied by carpets and curtains exclusively; 8462 square feet by furniture; 3,712 square feet by clothing and gent's furnishings; 8340 square feet by dry goods, cloaks and shoes; 6600 square feet by china, Queensware and glassware; 2025 square feet by engine and dynamo. We have the only passenger elevator, cable cash carrier, electric carpet machine and private electric plant in the county.

The fundamental principles upon which the business was founded and must rest so long as it exists, are: First—Selling only reliable merchandise, at fair prices for everything, to everybody alike without hidden reservations or concessions. Second—The rigid exclusion of all baits, or trifling deceptions, and the recognized obligation to, at all times, respect and protect at every point the confidence invited and so kindly given by our customers. Third—That all goods sold are wanted back again if the buyer is not pleased to retain them. Connect these modern conveniences and sterling principles, and don't you think it not only a pleasant, but safe store?

MRS MATTIE JOHNSON
MISS CALLA CLINE
MISS EIDA BROOKS
J.A. BARNES
MACK POGUE
O.R. JOHNSON
WALTER NORVELL
MISS MYRTLE THORNBURG
W.E. MILLER
J.W. McCAMISH
H. NORVELL
MISS ELLA McDONALD
CHAS. L. MILLER
MISS ALICE RIGSBY
VAN HUNTON
J.D. MILLER
A.A. SHAW
MISS ENOLA JOBES
T.P. BEST
CLYDE MARTIN
MISS MYRTLE GARRETT
HARRY TOOKER

PRIVATE OFFICE

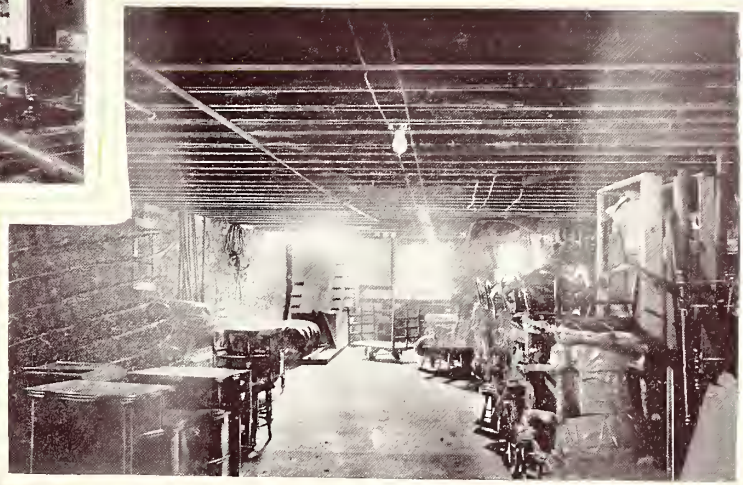
BOOKKEEPER &
CASHIER



CUT to the left shows our Electric Plant—a Westinghouse gas engine (35 horse power) directly connected to a 125 volt 22½ K. W. Dynamo, from which we derive power to operate an electric passenger and freight elevator, cable cash carrier, electric carpet machine, and 283 incandescent lights of 32 candle power.

RACINE DYNAMO

HARRY TOOKER



DELIVERY WAGONS